Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings of claims in the instant application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1. - 28. (Cancelled)

29. (Currently amended) A computer implemented method for generating an effective configuration for a managed product comprising:

generating a configuration object for a managed product, said configuration object specifying a configuration for a said managed product using a configuration object, said configuration object representing a certain behavior or desired functional state for a software feature of said managed product; and

generating a derived configuration object of said configuration object, said derived configuration object representing a modification to said configuration for said managed product using a derived configuration object of said configuration object,

wherein said configuration object and said derived configuration object comprise a configuration object inheritance chain; and

processing said configuration object inheritance chain using a parent-child inheritance merge process to obtain an effective configuration for said managed product,

wherein said parent-child inheritance merge process resolves collisions between elements of said configuration object and elements of said derived configuration object having the same collision detection name and merges the configuration

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object and said derived configuration object to obtain a merged configuration.

Claims 30. - 48. (Cancelled)

49.   (Currently amended)   A computer implemented method for generating an effective configuration for a managed product from a configuration object inheritance chain comprising:
~~generating an effective configuration for a managed product from a configuration object inheritance chain~~ obtaining a configuration object inheritance chain for a managed product, said configuration object inheritance chain comprising:

   a configuration object, said configuration object representing a certain behavior or desired functional state for a software feature of said managed product; and

   a derived configuration object of said configuration object, said derived configuration object representing a modification to said configuration for said managed product;

obtaining a mark-up language string for a most-derived configuration object;

converting said mark-up language string for said most-derived configuration object to a derived tree structure having nodes wherein a plurality of nodes in said derived tree structure include collision detection names;

obtaining a mark-up language string for a parent configuration object of said most-derived configuration object;

converting said mark-up language string for said parent configuration object to a base tree structure having nodes wherein a plurality of nodes in said base tree structure include collision detection names; and

combining said derived tree structure and said base tree structure, by resolving at least one collision between a node

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in the derived tree structure having a collision detection name
and a node in the base tree structure having said collision
detection name, to form a merged tree structure.

Claims 50. - 51. (Cancelled)

52. (Currently amended) The computer implemented method
of Claim ~~51~~ 49 wherein a collision detection name for a node in
said plurality of nodes is a name of a start tag when said
start tag does not include a name attribute.

53. (Currently amended) The computer implemented method
of Claim ~~51~~ 49 wherein a collision detection name for a node in
said plurality of nodes is combination of a name of a start tag
and a string determined by a namespecifier when said start tag
includes a name attribute with said namespecifier.

Claims 54. - 56. (Cancelled)

57. (Currently amended) The computer implemented method
of Claim ~~51~~ 49 wherein resolving at least one collision between
a node in the derived tree structure having a collision
detection name and a node in the base tree structure having
said collision detection name further comprises:
     merging said nodes to form a node of said merged tree when
said nodes have child nodes.

58. (Currently amended) The computer implemented method
of Claim ~~51~~ 49 wherein resolving at least one collision between
a node in the derived tree structure having a collision
detection name and a node in the base tree structure having
said collision detection name further comprises:
     copying said node in the derived tree structure to said
merged tree when said nodes are leaf nodes.

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59.   (Currently amended)   The computer implemented method
of Claim 51 49 wherein resolving at least one collision between
a node in the derived tree structure having a collision
detection name and a node in the base tree structure having
said collision detection name further comprises,:
selecting a combination of said nodes to form a node of
said merged tree based upon a value of a collision resolution
mode attribute in a start tag for an element corresponding to
one of said nodes.

60.   (Previously presented)   The computer implemented
method Claim 59 where said value of said collision resolution
mode attribute is merge.

61.   (Previously presented)   The computer implemented
method Claim 59 where said value of said collision resolution
mode attribute is use base.

62.   (Previously presented)   The computer implemented
method Claim 59 where said value of said collision resolution
mode attribute is use derived.

63.   (Previously presented)   The computer implemented
method Claim 59 where said value of said collision resolution
mode attribute is accumulate.

64.   (Currently amended)   The computer implemented method
of Claim 51 49 wherein said getting obtaining a mark-up
language string for a most-derived configuration object
includes:
collapsing sibling elements with identical values of a
name attribute into a single element.

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Claims 65. - 77. (Cancelled)

78.   (Currently amended)   A computer-program product comprising a computer-readable storage medium containing computer program code for a method <u>for generating an effective configuration for a managed product</u> comprising:
<u>generating a configuration object for a managed product, said configuration object</u> specifying a configuration for a̶ <u>said</u> managed product u̶s̶i̶n̶g̶ ̶a̶ ̶c̶o̶n̶f̶i̶g̶u̶r̶a̶t̶i̶o̶n̶ ̶o̶b̶j̶e̶c̶t̶, said configuration object representing a certain behavior or desired functional state for a software feature of said managed product; a̶n̶d̶
<u>generating a derived configuration object of said configuration object, said derived configuration object</u> representing a modification to said configuration for said managed product u̶s̶i̶n̶g̶ ̶a̶ ̶d̶e̶r̶i̶v̶e̶d̶ ̶c̶o̶n̶f̶i̶g̶u̶r̶a̶t̶i̶o̶n̶ ̶o̶b̶j̶e̶c̶t̶ ̶o̶f̶ ̶s̶a̶i̶d̶ c̶o̶n̶f̶i̶g̶u̶r̶a̶t̶i̶o̶n̶ ̶o̶b̶j̶e̶c̶t̶<u>,</u>
<u>wherein said configuration object and said derived configuration object comprise a configuration object inheritance chain; and</u>
<u>processing said configuration object inheritance chain using a parent-child inheritance merge process to obtain an effective configuration for said managed product</u>
<u>wherein said parent-child inheritance merge process resolves collisions between elements of said configuration object and elements of said derived configuration object having the same collision detection name and merges the configuration object and said derived configuration object to obtain a merged configuration.</u>

79.   (Currently amended)   A̶ ̶c̶o̶m̶p̶u̶t̶e̶r̶-̶b̶a̶s̶e̶d̶ ̶s̶t̶r̶u̶c̶t̶u̶r̶e̶ <u>An apparatus for generating an effective configuration for a managed product, said apparatus</u> comprising:

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a memory having stored therein at least a portion of an application for generating an effective configuration for a managed product, said application comprising:

means for generating a configuration object for a managed product, said configuration object specifying a configuration for a said managed product using a configuration object, said configuration object representing a certain behavior or desired functional state for a software feature of said managed product; and

means for generating a derived configuration object of said configuration object, said derived configuration object representing a modification to said configuration for said managed product using a derived configuration object of said configuration object,

wherein said configuration object and said derived configuration object comprise a configuration object inheritance chain; and

means for processing said configuration object inheritance chain using a parent-child inheritance merge process to obtain an effective configuration for said managed product

wherein said parent-child inheritance merge process resolves collisions between elements of said configuration object and elements of said derived configuration object having the same collision detection name and merges the configuration object and said derived configuration object to obtain a merged configuration.

Claims 80. - 86.   (Cancelled)